

436 Balls of wax and tobacco were, and are now, definite standards
804 of trade. To some extent rubber as a medium of exchange has been
used through contact with eastern Angola. The Umbundu word
ocilila expresses a weight of about thirty kilos.

- 805 There is no measure for minutes or hours. I have seen a man
221 of the Luchazi tribe keep account of the number of days taken on
journey by cutting notches on a stick. Ngonga says that the Ovimbundu
reckon by cutting notches, also by knotting a piece of string. Three
days would be expressed by the words *akumbi atatu* ("three suns").
The word day or sun is used in fixing a time. There is no word for
week. A month is *osai*, which is the word for moon. When the corn
is ripe the people say, "We are in a new year." Another yearly time
mark is the arrival of the first rains, probably in the middle of
September.

The words *oku lima* ("to cultivate") yield the word *ulima*, which
designates the period between the beginnings of two rainy seasons.
Corn is planted about the time of the first heavy rains, which occur
in late September or early October. Naturally, this important occasion
forms a somewhat uncertain time base; nevertheless it is the one
used to express the lapse of years up to five in number. After
such a period the estimation of time is unreliable.

INDUSTRIES

IRON-WORK

- 326 Among occupations of primary importance is that of the blacksmith
(*ocirinda*). Owing to the increasing importation of hoe blades
and other iron goods, together with the facilities for collecting scrap
iron, the winning and smelting of iron is increasingly rare. There are
probably very few places where the old type of conical clay furnace
now exists. Almost any fragments of iron are melted at the forge
where a box is kept to hold nails, hoop iron from packing cases, and
other fragments resulting from proximity to a European culture.

Nothing is mixed with the iron, neither is there any casting in
molds. The only process is the forging of red-hot iron. The Ovimbundu
do not draw iron wire, although they know of the process which is
practised by the Vachokue.

The work of the blacksmith was studied at the village of Njongolo
in Elende. The men were for a time reticent respecting the nature
of their training and the ceremony of initiation, but the chief of the
village helped considerably by persuading the men to speak freely.